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Request for the inclusion of an item in the provisional agenda of the sixty-ninth session

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Commonwealth of Independent States

Letter dated 22 October 2013 from the Permanent Representative of Belarus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with rule 13 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, I have the honour, in my capacity as Permanent Representative of the State that is currently President of the Commonwealth of Independent States, to request the inclusion in the provisional agenda of the sixty-ninth session of the Assembly of an item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Commonwealth of Independent States".

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, an explanatory memorandum (see annex I) and a related draft resolution (see annex II) are attached.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annexes issued as a document of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Andrei **Dapkiunas**

14-27303 (E) 250314 260314

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Annex I

Explanatory memorandum

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Commonwealth of Independent States

The agreement establishing the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was signed on 8 December 1991. On 21 December 1991 a protocol to that agreement was signed in Alma-Ata in which the parties emphasized that the Commonwealth of Independent States was based on the principle of equality. The States members of CIS are the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Belarus, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

CIS serves to further develop and strengthen relations of friendship, good-neighbourliness, inter-ethnic harmony, and mutual trust, understanding and cooperation among its member States.

In accordance with the Charter of 22 January 1993 (registered with the United Nations on 3 August 1994) the purposes of CIS are:

Cooperation in political, economic, environmental, humanitarian, cultural and other fields;

Comprehensive and balanced economic and social development of CIS States within the framework of a common economic space, inter-State cooperation and integration;

Ensuring human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with the generally recognized principles and norms of international law;

Cooperation in ensuring international peace and security, the implementation of effective measures to reduce armaments and military expenditure, the elimination of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, and the achievement of general and complete disarmament;

Assisting nationals of CIS States to engage in unrestricted communication, contact and movement within the Commonwealth;

Mutual legal assistance and cooperation in other areas of legal relations;

Peaceful settlement of disputes and conflicts between CIS States.

The highest body of CIS is the Council of Heads of State, which decides on fundamental matters concerning the Commonwealth's activities. Interaction among member States takes place through the Commonwealth's coordinating institutions: the Council of Heads of Government, the Council of Ministers for Foreign Affairs and the Economic Council.

The Commonwealth's Executive Committee is its permanent executive, administrative and coordinating body.

Under article 34 of the CIS Charter, on the basis of agreements between Commonwealth member States on cooperation in the economic, social and other spheres, sectoral cooperation bodies may be established to develop agreed principles and rules for such cooperation and facilitate their practical implementation.

Interaction among the legislative bodies of CIS States is organized by the Interparliamentary Assembly, which discusses cooperation within the Commonwealth and develops joint proposals for activities of the national parliaments.

On 24 March 1994, the Commonwealth was granted observer status in the United Nations General Assembly (see resolution 48/237). Since 19 April 1994, CIS has also had observer status in the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

The CIS Executive Committee has working contacts with a number of specialized agencies of the United Nations system, in particular the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Treaty relations have been established with the executive bodies of UNCTAD, the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the United Nations Office at Geneva and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Since July 2013, the Executive Committee has had a Point of Contact for interaction with the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004).

Close attention is paid to developing CIS cooperation with the United Nations in key areas such as conflict prevention and combating terrorism, extremism and illicit drug trafficking.

The prospects for collaboration with the United Nations system in the areas of sustainable development, health, rights and humanitarian cooperation are also very promising.

This has been demonstrated by the signing of memorandums of understanding between the CIS Council on Health Cooperation and the European regional office of the World Health Organization (2 July 2002) and between the Inter-State Humanitarian Cooperation Fund of the CIS member States and UNESCO (28 November 2008). Partnerships have been established between the Inter-State Council on the Legal Protection of Intellectual Property and the World Intellectual Property Organization; the Statistical Committee of CIS and the statistics services of the United Nations; and the Intergovernmental Council for Cooperation in Construction and ECE and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme.

The transport coordination meeting of CIS member States cooperates with the ECE Inland Transport Committee, including through regular working contacts in such areas of cooperation as the development of multi-modal transport and Euro-Asian transport links, and above all, the use of international transport corridors and promoting cooperation between the ECE Inland Transport Committee and CIS States in Central Asia and the Caucasus.

Accordingly, a solid track record of interaction at various levels between the United Nations and CIS has been developed in recent years, with the aim of addressing common social, economic and humanitarian challenges. However, a systematic basis for this cooperation is needed in order to strengthen its practical aspects and enhance its effectiveness. This will facilitate the development and deepening of the links between CIS and the specialized agencies of the United Nations system. That is the purpose of the General Assembly resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the Commonwealth of Independent States, a draft of which is also attached.

Annex II

Draft resolution

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Commonwealth of Independent States

The General Assembly,

Referring to Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, which encourages measures for regional cooperation to advance the purposes and principles of the United Nations,

Referring also to its resolution 48/237 of 24 March 1994, in which it granted the Commonwealth of Independent State observer status in the General Assembly,

Noting with satisfaction that the activities of the Commonwealth of Independent States are consistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations,

Reaffirming that achieving international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character is one of the purposes of the United Nations,

Referring to the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council, including resolution 1631 (2005) of 17 October 2005, as well as statements of the President of the Council, including the statement of 13 January 2010,[1] in which the importance of developing effective partnerships between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant statutes of the regional and subregional organizations, is emphasized,

Welcoming the commitment of the Commonwealth of Independent States to intensify and deepen its cooperation with the agencies, programmes and funds of the United Nations system,

Convinced that strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and the Commonwealth of Independent States will advance the purposes and principles of the United Nations,

1. *Takes note* of the activity of the Commonwealth of Independent States to strengthen regional cooperation in such areas as trade and economic development; exchange of statistical data and economic information; culture; education; health care; sport; tourism; science and innovation; environmental protection and response to natural and man-made disasters; combating organized crime, illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors, terrorist acts, manifestations of extremism and illegal migration; and other related areas;

2. *Notes* the importance of strengthening dialogue, cooperation and coordination between the United Nations system and the Commonwealth of Independent States and invites the Secretary-General of the United Nations to hold for that purpose regular consultations with the Chair of the Executive Committee and

[1] S/PRST/2010/1.

Executive Secretary of the Commonwealth, making use of appropriate inter-agency forums and formats for that purpose, including annual consultations between the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the heads of regional organizations;

3. *Invites* the specialized agencies and other organizations, programmes and funds of the United Nations system, as well as international financial institutions, to develop their cooperation with the Commonwealth of Independent States;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its seventy-first session on the implementation of the present resolution;

5. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-first session an item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Commonwealth of Independent States".